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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF
THE MISSIONS
OF CYRIL AND METHODIUS

BY FRANCIS DVORNIK

The eleven-hundredth anniversary of the arrival of a Byzantine Mission in Moravia (863) revived the interest of Slavic historians and philologists in the history of SS. Cyril and Methodius and served to reopen discussions concerning the significance of their activity in Moravia for the development of the Slavs.

It was widely believed that their mission had a profoundly religious character—the conversion of the Moravian pagans to Christianity. This interpretation is not quite correct. The words which the author of Cyril's biography lets the Moravian ruler Rastislav address to the Emperor Michael should make us cautious about the real character of the Byzantine mission in Moravia. Rastislav is supposed to have declared that his people had already rejected paganism and were observing Christian rules.¹ Some saw in this declaration an exaggeration and attributed it to Rastislav or to the biographer. Recent archaeological discoveries made in Moravia, however, confirm the correctness of Rastislav's declaration. Thus far the foundations of sixteen stone churches have been discovered, and at least five of them were erected before the arrival of the Byzantine mission.²

One of these churches with a rectangular presbytery, which recalls early Iro-Scottish architecture, led some scholars to the conclusion that the first missionaries in Moravia were Iro-Scottish monks from Bavarian monasteries.³ If this were so, the beginning of the Christianization of

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¹ П. А. Лавров, ed., *Материалы по истории возникновения древнейшей славянской письменности* (Leningrad, 1930), pp. 26, 60, 71.

² A good résumé of the recent archaeological discoveries in Moravia is given by J. Poulík, *Stali Moravané budují svůj stát* (Gottwaldov, 1963).

³ The principal defender of this thesis is J. Cibulka in his book *Velkomoravský kostel v Modré u Velehradu a začátky křesťanství na Moravě* (Prague, 1958).

the Moravians should be dated from the second half of the eighth century, when the Iro-Scottish missions flourished under the direction of St. Virgil, the Irish bishop of Salzburg (745-84). At that time Passau also had an Irish bishop, Sidonius. After Virgil's death, however, Charlemagne appointed as bishop of Salzburg the Benedictine Abbot Arn and ordered the Iro-Scottish monasteries to accept the Benedictine rule. The missions among the Slavs were thenceforward directed not by Iro-Scottish but by Frankish clergy.

Although it is possible that Christianity had already penetrated sporadically into southern Moravia and the southern part of modern Slovakia at the end of the eighth century, it did not take firm root among the Moravians until the first half of the ninth century, especially after the conversion of Rastislav's predecessor Mojmir, which could be dated around 822.⁴ The biographer of Methodius mentions that among the Moravian missionaries there were priests from Italy, Greece, and Germany.

Moravian Christianity even had a species of ecclesiastical organization before the arrival of the Greek brothers. The biographer of Cyril, when speaking of the Saints' opponents in Moravia, mentions "arkhierei"⁵ and their disciples. The Slavic word *arkhierei* was generally translated "bishops." However, when the biographers of the two brothers speak of bishops, they use the words *episkup* and *arkhiepis-kup*. It is therefore evident that the author of Cyril's life did not on this occasion have bishops in mind. He was speaking of archpriests, whom the Frankish bishops used to appoint in missionary territories. They represented the bishops and directed the organization of the new Christian Churches. Archpriests were most probably instituted in Moravia by the bishop of Passau, who seems to have been most active in the conversion of the Moravians.

All this shows that Christianity was already well established in Moravia in the first half of the ninth century thanks to Frankish missionaries. The conversion of pagans could not therefore have been the main aim of the Byzantine mission in Moravia. Rastislav desired more than new missionaries. This is also indicated by the biographer of Cyril, who reveals that Rastislav asked for the sending of a bishop.

The new discoveries made in Moravia concerning the spread of Christianity render this demand understandable. The young Church of Moravia had grown, and the Moravian ruler thought that the moment had come when he should have an episcopal organization in his lands. We can deduce from a bull of Hadrian II that Rastislav had

⁴ We do not know the date of his conversion. In 822 Louis the Pious received envoys from Bohemia and Moravia in Frankfurt (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, I, 209). The submission of the Moravians should be dated from the end of the eighth century or the beginning of the ninth. In 805 an expedition was made against Bohemia (*ibid.*, p. 192). The Moravians are not mentioned. Submission implied Christianization.

⁵ Лавров, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

first approached Rome with the same request.⁶ Nicholas I (858-67), however, was too dependent on the support of the Franks, and he rejected Rastislav's request. It was evident that the Moravian ruler, after having freed himself from political dependence on the Frankish Empire, could not tolerate Frankish direction of the young Church.⁷ Rebuffed by Rome, Rastislav turned toward Byzantium.

The Byzantines did not send a bishop to Rastislav, but only Constantine-Cyril, called the Philosopher, one of the best scholars in Byzantium at that time, and his brother Methodius, formerly an administrator of a Slavic territory and then a monk at Mount Olympus in Asia Minor. This, however, does not mean that Rastislav's demand was rejected. The establishment of a bishopric in Moravia was only postponed until the period when the new Church should possess an independent status with its own liturgy and a satisfactory number of native clergy trained by the cultural mission headed by the two brothers.⁸ In order to achieve this, Constantine-Cyril composed a special alphabet for the Slavs—called Glagolitic.⁹ While still in Constantinople he began to translate liturgical books into the Macedonian Slavic idiom, which he himself spoke and which could be easily understood at that time by all other Slavic nations. He continued this activity in Moravia, where he also trained young men in Slavic letters.

Rastislav seems to have addressed yet another request to the Byzantines. He must have been aware that if he wanted to consolidate his state further, he must give it a good legal code to make possible its social and juridical development. After his break with the Franks he did not want to introduce Frankish legal customs into his land and seems therefore to have appealed to the Byzantines for a legal code.

There is in Rastislav's message to the emperor an indication that he did this. In the Legend of Constantine-Cyril (chap. 14) he is said to have asked for the sending of a good teacher "because from you the good law (*zakonъ*) is spreading to all sides." The biographer of Methodius uses instead of *zakonъ* the word *pravъda*.¹⁰ This word has

⁶ The Latin text of this bull is not preserved. We have only a Slavonic version of the document in Methodius' biography (*ibid.*, p. 73). Its genuineness is, however, generally accepted by specialists.

⁷ Rastislav could regard himself as a ruler independent of the Frankish Empire from 850 on.

⁸ It can also be imagined that Patriarch Photius postponed sending a bishop to Moravia in order not to alienate even more Pope Nicholas I, who was hesitating to recognize him as a legitimate patriarch. Moravia was a missionary land, but had hitherto been evangelized mostly by clergy of the Roman obedience. The relics believed to be those of St. Clement, the third successor of St. Peter in Rome, which the brothers were bringing with them, were calculated to enhance the importance of the mission and to assure Rastislav that his demands would be fulfilled.

⁹ The specialists are now almost unanimous in accepting the thesis that the alphabet invented by Cyril was Glagolitic and not the alphabet used today by the Orthodox Slavs, which is called Cyrillic.

¹⁰ Лавров, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 60, 72.

traditionally been understood as meaning divine law or doctrine, but it has been shown recently that Rastislav had in mind a handbook of civil law as a basis for his own legislative work. It has also been shown that the oldest Slavic manual of civil law called *Zakonъ sudnyjъ ljudemъ* is a translation and adaptation of the Byzantine handbook Ecloga and that the author of this Slavic handbook of civil law was Constantine himself.¹¹

In this way, therefore, the request of Rastislav was fulfilled. The Byzantine mission seems, however, also to have had a political aspect. Unable to arrest the growth of Rastislav's power, Louis the German saw himself forced to seek an ally against the mighty Moravian ruler. He addressed himself to Boris, the khagan of Bulgaria, who was also jealous of the growing influence of his neighbor Rastislav. There is little information available about the negotiations between Louis and Boris. They must have started in 862 if not earlier. We learn from a letter sent by Pope Nicholas I in 863 to the bishop of Constance¹² that the Bulgarian khagan was to come to Tulln in order to make arrangements for the campaign against Rastislav and that he promised to accept Frankish missionaries.

It seems natural that Rastislav also saw himself forced to look for an ally, not against Louis but against the Bulgars, who had become allies of Louis in his anti-Moravian campaign. He must have known about the somewhat strained relations between the Bulgarians and the Byzantines, who wanted to extend their political and religious influence over Bulgaria. The biographers of the two brothers do not mention the political background of Rastislav's initiative, but this is understandable. Byzantine hagiographers were only interested in the religious deeds of their heroes.

It appears that the political aspect of the Moravo-Byzantine alliance was not forgotten by the Byzantines. Greek chroniclers report that, profiting by difficulties which beset Bulgaria because of a bad harvest, a Byzantine army invaded the country and the Byzantine fleet made a demonstration on the Danube. The result of this intervention was the capitulation of Boris. He was forced to abandon the Franks and promised to accept the Byzantine form of Christianity.¹³

¹¹ For details see J. Vašica's study "Origine Cyrillo-Méthodienne du plus ancien code slave dit *Zakon sudnyj*," *Byzantinoslavica*, XII (1951), 154-74; *idem*, "Jazyková povaha Zakona sudného," *Slavia*, XXVII (1958), 521-37 (a linguistic study of the document).

¹² *MGH, Epistolae*, VII, 293.

¹³ See F. Dvornik, *Les Légendes de Constantin et de Méthode vues de Byzance*, Supplement I of *Byzantinoslavica* (Prague, 1933), pp. 228 ff.; J. Dekan, *Začiatky slovenských dejín a Ríša veľkomoravská* (Bratislava, 1951), p. 80; Franz Grivec, *Konstantin und Method: Lehrer der Slaven* (Wiesbaden, 1960), p. 55; Zdenek R. Dittrich, *Christianity in Great-Moravia* (Groningen, 1962), pp. 98 ff., rejects the political aspect of the Moravo-Byzantine alliance without giving any reason. His presentation of Rastislav's initiative in Byzantium cannot be accepted. He minimizes the results, presenting the Byzantine mission as a great disappointment for Rastislav.

All this happened in 864, as is generally believed. It has been shown that the defeat of the Bulgarians should be dated after the Byzantine victory over the Arabs (September 3, 863).¹⁴ The invasion of Bulgaria could have occurred in the spring of 864. Boris' envoys to Constantinople were baptized there soon afterward, and Boris himself became a Christian in 865, accepting the name of his godfather, the Emperor Michael.

This date corresponds better to our conceptions about the nature of Moravo-Byzantine negotiations. It also explains why Louis the German, who was planning an attack on Rastislav in 863 with the help of the Bulgars, had to postpone it until 864 and then to act alone without the help of Boris-Michael.

Thus the Byzantine mission in Moravia had, above all, a cultural character. The Emperor Michael III, his uncle the regent Bardas, and the Patriarch Photius must have attributed great importance to this mission. This is indicated by the choice of its leaders. Constantine-Cyril was one of the most distinguished scholars in contemporary Byzantium. He had succeeded his teacher Photius as professor of philosophy at the imperial "university."¹⁵ At the time the Moravian embassy reached Constantinople, Constantine-Cyril was teaching philosophy at the patriarchal Academy, which had been reorganized by his friend, the Patriarch Photius.¹⁶

The government had already entrusted him with two important embassies, one to the Arabs,¹⁷ and another, particularly important, to the Khazars, in 861.¹⁸ His brother Methodius accompanied him on this embassy. If Rastislav had asked only for missionaries speaking the Slavic language, as was suggested by some interpreters of this passage of the Legend, the Byzantines would have been able to send him a number of priests who spoke Slavic and who had some experience in missionary work among the numerous Slavs living in the Byzantine provinces.¹⁹ It would not have been necessary to deprive the capital of such a prominent master as Constantine-Cyril and of his brother.

Some of these clerics certainly accompanied the brothers on their journey to Moravia. At least, we are entitled to suppose that the clerics, who were, after Methodius' death, expelled from Moravia, were Byzan-

¹⁴ See A. Vaillant and M. Lascaris, "La date de la conversion des Bulgares," *Revue des études slaves*, XIII (1933), 5-15.

¹⁵ Cf. Dvornik, *Les Légendes . . .*, pp. 79 ff.

¹⁶ F. Dvornik, "Photius et la réorganisation de l'académie patriarcale," *Analecta Bollandiana*, LXVIII (1950), pp. 108-25.

¹⁷ Dvornik, *Les Légendes . . .*, pp. 85 ff. I do not doubt the historicity of this embassy described in the Legend of Constantine-Cyril. It must have taken place in 851. The leader of the embassy was the "asecrete" George, a high imperial functionary.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 148 ff.

¹⁹ On the progress of Christianity among the Slavs in Greece see F. Dvornik, *Les Slaves, Byzance et Rome au IX^e siècle* (Paris, 1926), pp. 63 ff.

tine subjects. The Life of Clement²⁰ mentions especially Clement, Laurentius, Angelarius, "and others." These clerics probably assisted Constantine-Cyril in the composition of the Slavic alphabet.²¹ Moreover, it was not the custom in Byzantium to send clerics alone on imperial missions. Some high functionaries usually led the embassy and cared for the security of its members. They would have been charged to discuss with Rastislav other matters consequent on the conclusion of a kind of alliance. We can imagine that some Byzantine artisans and merchants also joined or followed the embassy to the new land.

From the description of Constantine's activity in Moravia, it seems evident that the main object of the Byzantine mission was not conversion but rather instruction. Rastislav is said to have gathered disciples whom he entrusted to Constantine for instruction. This shows that Christianity was well advanced in Moravia, because there were already numerous young natives preparing themselves for the priesthood.

Besides giving instruction, Constantine with his brother and other assistants continued his literary activity. Their first aim was to give the young Church liturgical books in the Slavic language. The Legend of Constantine reports that Constantine translated the whole Office and Mass formulary. This statement opens a problem which is still debated among specialists, namely, whether this translation was made from liturgical books of the Byzantine or Roman rite.

The Slavonic text of the Life of Constantine suggests that the Office, the breviary for the clergy, was translated from the Greek original. The last part of the breviary at least is designated by a word (*povechernitsa*) which is a translation of the Greek term (*apodeipnon*). The problem of the translation of a Mass formulary is more complicated. The Moravians were already accustomed to the Roman Mass formulary which was used by the Frankish clergy. It seems that it would not have been good policy to impose the long Byzantine Mass formulary on native priests and people who were not used to it.

We know now that there existed a Greek translation of the Latin Mass formulary, which was called by the Greeks the liturgy of St. Peter.²² Some prayers from the Byzantine rite were added to this translation. Although the manuscript tradition of this translation can so far

²⁰ *Vita S. Clementis*, in Jacques P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca* (166 vols.; Paris, 1857-66), Vol. CXXVI, col. 1216 (hereafter cited as Migne, PG). Modern edition by Н. И. Тунцкій, *Материалы для истории, жизни и деятельности учениковъ св. Кирилла и Мефодія* (Sergiev Posad, 1918), p. 104. А. Милев, ed., *Теофилакт: Климент Охридски* (Sofia, 1955), p. 60.

²¹ The biographer of Constantine speaks of him only as the inventor of the new letters. Both biographers of the brothers mention, however, that other companions had joined Constantine in his prayer for inspiration. This indicates that there were many young clerics in Constantinople who were interested in such an enterprise.

²² H. W. Codrington, *The Liturgy of Saint Peter* (Münster in W., 1936); J. M. Hanssens, "La liturgie romano-byzantine de Saint Pierre," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, IV (1935), 234-55; V (1939), 103-51. Most important is the study by J. Vašica, "Slovanská liturgie sv. Petra," *Byzantinoslavica*, VIII (1939-40), 1-54, with a résumé in Latin.

be traced only to the first half of the ninth century, it is quite probable that it was already known during the first half of the eighth century among the Greeks of southern Italy and of the eastern part of Illyricum. We must not forget that the whole of Illyricum was, down to the year 732, under the jurisdiction of Rome. We can suppose that this liturgy was known in Thessalonica and that both brothers were acquainted with it.

It could have been this Greek translation of the Latin Mass which was adapted by Constantine into Old Slavonic. The brothers supplemented their translation from the Greek with the translation of parts of a Latin formulary. We come to this conclusion by comparing the "Fragments of Kiev,"²³ the oldest monument of Slavic liturgy so far known, with the Mass of St. Peter and with Latin formularies which were used by the Frankish missionaries in Moravia.

Further progress has been made in determining the Latin formulary used by the brothers in their adaptation. This was not the so-called Sacramentar of Padua, as has been thought,²⁴ but perhaps rather a formulary of Salzburg²⁵ which may have been composed by Paulinus II, patriarch of Aquileia. This was used in Salzburg and by the missionaries in Pannonia and Moravia.

The Byzantine origin of the translator of the Latin formulary as preserved in the "Fragments of Kiev," can be detected in the use of some expressions current only in the Byzantine liturgy. It has also been shown²⁶ that in the Glagolitic Missals still used in some places in Yugoslavia there are many vestiges that betray that a great part of the Missal was translated from a Greek original. The Missals are not of Moravian origin, of course, but these vestiges seem to indicate that the Slavonic translation of the liturgy of the Mass was already known in Dalmatia in the ninth century.

There is another problem which preoccupies the Slavic philologists and historians of this period. Some think that the brothers only became acquainted with the Greek translation of the Latin Mass—the liturgy of St. Peter—in Rome in 868. They are supposed to have found it in Greek monasteries in Rome, where this liturgy was in use beside the Byzantine liturgy. The Latin formulary which they used in their adaptation is said to have been found in Venice, where they stopped

²³ Cf. V. Jagić, *Glagolitica* (Vienna, 1890).

²⁴ Especially by K. Mohlberg, "Il messale glagolitico di Kiev ed il prototipo Romano," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia*, Series 3, II (Rome, 1928), 207-320.

²⁵ It is preserved in manuscripts, Munich, Clm 15815a; Vienna, Cod. Vind. Ser. nov. 4225; Salzburg Studienbibliothek, Cod. MII, 296. The latter manuscript was published by A. Dold, "Neue Blätter des Salzburger Kurzsakramentar," *Texte und Arbeiten*, XXV (Beuron, 1934), 35-48. *Idem*, "Abermals neue Fragmente des Salzburger Kurzsakramentars," *ibid.*, XXVI-XXVIII (Beuron, 1936), 71-98. A new edition is being prepared by K. Gamber.

²⁶ Especially by J. Vajs, in his study "Mešní řád charvatsko-hlaholský vatikánského misálu," *Acta Academiae Velehradensis*, XV (1939), 89-141. See also Vašica, "Slovanská liturgie . . .," *Byzantinoslavica*, pp. 5-10.

after their return from Moravia. The translation would thus have been made in Rome.²⁷

This theory cannot, however, be accepted. The existence of a Greek liturgy of St. Peter is traceable in manuscript tradition at least as far back as the first half of the ninth century. The discovery of the Mass formulary of Salzburg shows that such a formulary was used by Frankish priests in missionary lands. It originated in Aquileia, it is true, but this does not mean that the brothers could only have found it in the territory of the patriarchate of Aquileia. Moreover, when the brothers left Moravia after activities there lasting about three years, they did not intend to return to that country. They left Moravia because they had given the young Church there all she needed for an independent existence. This means that they had translated not only the Office and the Gospels but also the Mass into Old Slavonic. How can it be imagined that this translation, made in Rome, could have been introduced into Moravia in the absence of the two brothers? The opposition to these innovations which they encountered in Moravia on the part of the Frankish clergy and in Venice can only be fully explained if we accept the fact that their opponents knew about the use of the Slavonic language in the Mass. The objection that the brothers could not introduce such an innovation without the consent of Rome is valueless. The brothers were not of the Roman but of the Byzantine obedience and were following, in their innovations, the custom of the Eastern Church. This was to give to the nations converted by Eastern missionaries liturgical books in their own language.

It is also unwarranted to think that consent to this innovation was only given toward the end of 869 by Pope Hadrian II in the bull sent to the Slavic rulers Rastislav, Kocel, and Svatopluk.²⁸ Already in 868 the Mass was celebrated in Slavonic in Rome by Methodius and his disciples, newly ordained as priests, on the orders of the Pope.²⁹ The bull only confirmed solemnly what had already been approved by the Pope at the end of 867, when the brothers reached Rome. At that time

²⁷ Cf. F. Zagiba, "Neue Probleme in der Cyrillomethodianischen Forschung," *Ostkirchliche Studien*, XI (1962), pp. 112 ff. More bibliographical indications will be found in this study. See also K. Gamber, "Das glagolitische Sakramentar der Slavenapostel Cyrill und Method und seine lateinische Vorlage," *ibid.*, VI (1957), 165-73.

²⁸ *Vita Methodii*, chap. 8, in Лавров, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

²⁹ *Vita Constantini*, chap. 17, *ibid.*, pp. 33, 64. It is thus quite possible that the Mass was said by the ordained disciples according to the Roman rite as translated by the brothers. It seems, however, that Constantine also translated the Byzantine Mass formulary of St. John Chrysostom, and that the so-called Fragments of Prague contain a part of this translation. The Fragments are now believed to be a part of the Euchologium Sinaiticum comprising the liturgical prayers of the Eastern Church. If this is so, then we must suppose that the brothers had intended to introduce the whole of the Eastern liturgy into Moravia. Even in this case we are entitled to assume that the translation of the liturgy of St. Peter was made by Constantine before he left for Rome. This problem will not be definitely solved until a new philological examination of the Fragments of Prague, of the Euchologium, and the Fragments of Kiev is made.

he is said to have accepted the Slavic liturgical books, to have blessed them and deposited them on the altar in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore.

The biographies of the brothers say very little about their activity in Moravia. The biographer of Constantine, after mentioning the opposition of the Latin clergy in Moravia to the liturgical innovations and the victorious defense of his hero, speaks of Constantine's efforts to eradicate some bad pagan customs which the Latin priests had left unchallenged and of his vindication of the indissolubility of Christian marriage. Both biographers say that they left Moravia after a stay of forty months—the *Vita Methodii* reduces this to three years—in order to have their disciples consecrated. They stopped in the territory of Kocel, in Pannonia, at his residence at Blatnograd on Lake Balaton. Kocel was the son of Pribina, who had been expelled by Mojmir from Nitra and to whom the Franks had entrusted the administration of this territory. The population, mostly Slavic, had already been converted to Christianity by the Frankish priests of Salzburg. Pribina and his son had shown their zeal for the spread of Christianity by constructing numerous churches. Kocel became enthusiastic about the Slavic liturgy and letters and committed about fifty young men to the brothers for instruction.

From Pannonia they reached Venice, probably in the late autumn of 867. There again Constantine had to defend his innovations against the criticisms voiced by the Latin clergy.

Why did they stop in Venice? Many specialists still continue to interpret their stay in this city as a mere stopover on their journey to Rome to obtain from the Pope sanction for their innovations and the consecration of their disciples.³⁰ Some think that they tried to obtain this from the patriarch of Aquileia.³¹ This interpretation does not correspond with what we have learned about the sending of a Byzantine mission to Moravia. Rastislav had certainly informed the brothers that Rome had rejected his request for a bishop, and there was, in 867, no special reason why he should hope that Rome would be more favorable to his renewed demand. He could hardly be encouraged by the attitude of Nicholas I in 864, the year he was attacked by Louis the German and forced to recognize his sovereignty. The Pope had sent his apostolic blessing to Louis wishing him success in his campaign.³²

The patriarch of Aquileia was almost independent of the Franks, but he certainly was not competent to consecrate a bishop for Moravia. This could have been done only by the Frankish bishops or by Rome. The patriarch could not afford to become involved in any conflict with the Frankish clergy and Louis the German.

³⁰ See especially Grivec, *op. cit.*, pp. 68 ff.

³¹ Recently Dittrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 151 ff., and V. Vavřínek, "Die Christianisierung und Kirchenorganisation Grossmährens," *Historica*, VII (1963), 42.

³² *MGH, Ep.*, VI, 293.

It is more logical to see the stay of the brothers in Venice as being motivated by their desire to return to Constantinople by boat. It seemed an easier route than to travel across the Bulgarian lands. It is also possible that the news which had reached Moravia from neighboring Bulgaria decided them to avoid a passage through this territory. Boris-Michael, dissatisfied with the Byzantine missionaries, turned again to the West and, in the second half of 866, sent embassies to Louis the German and to Nicholas I with a request for Latin clergy. Before the end of that year two bishops, sent by Nicholas, appeared in Bulgaria, and Boris was so well satisfied with them that he even sent back the bishop of Passau with his priests who had been dispatched by Louis the German.³³ By taking a boat in Venice the brothers could reach Byzantine territory in Dyrrhachium, whence they would be able to travel along the Via Egnatia to Thessalonica and Constantinople.

As has been shown, the Byzantines were willing in 862 to consecrate a bishop for Moravia, after the mission led by the two brothers had laid the foundations for an independent life of this young Church. This aim was achieved as a result of their cultural and liturgical work during three years. They were also able to choose among their Moravian disciples some who could become religious leaders of that country. After achieving these objects the brothers were now on their way back to Constantinople.

It appears, however, that the eagerness of Kocel to introduce these novelties into his country had also interfered with their planning.³⁴ They stayed much longer in Pannonia than they had planned and reached Venice in late autumn, when shipping in the Adriatic Sea became dangerous and was often suspended.³⁵

The invitation of the Pope most probably reached them in Venice. It can be imagined that their stay in that city and the rumor of their liturgical innovations had stirred the interest of the Italian clergy. Many may have heard of their activities in Moravia from their compatriots who had worked there as missionaries. The *Vita Constantini* mentions the invitation after the account of the disputation with the "trilinguists," the Latin priests who reproached Constantine for his innovation, arguing that holy books should be written only in three languages, Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. The *Vita Methodii* does not speak about their stay in Venice and places such a disputation in Rome. Nothing in these most important sources indicates that the invitation had reached them in Moravia, as is believed by some historians of the

³³ For details see Dvornik, *Les Slaves, Byzance et Rome . . .*, pp. 183 ff. *Idem*, *The Slavs, Their Early History and Civilization* (Boston, 1956), pp. 118 ff.

³⁴ *Vita Constantini*, chap. 15, in Лавров, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 62.

³⁵ On the dangers of sea voyages in the Adriatic in the winter see F. Dvornik, *The Photian Schism* (Cambridge, Eng., 1948), pp. 139, 140.

two brothers,³⁶ and that the brothers were on their way to Rome. If they had been determined to go to Rome, the Pope would have learned about it in any event, and it would not have been necessary to invite them. Such an initiative on the part of Nicholas I is very understandable after he had learned that they were waiting in Venice for an opportunity to sail to Constantinople. When the invitation of Nicholas had reached them, they did not hesitate to accept it. First of all they had no prejudice against the Roman patriarch and the Latin Church. At the same time it was a good opportunity to make a pilgrimage to the apostolic shrines in Rome, as many of their compatriots were doing.³⁷

The stay of the two brothers in Rome changed radically both the character of their mission and their own destinies. They probably reached Rome in late December, 867. Pope Nicholas had died on November 13, but they were solemnly received by his successor Hadrian II, who was elected pope on December 14. The relics believed to be those of Pope Clement I,³⁸ which Constantine had discovered in Cherson on his mission to the Khazars and which the brothers had taken with them to Moravia, provided the main reason for such a reception.

Their Roman visit augured well, at the beginning. Hadrian II not only approved their liturgical innovations but ordered that their disciples should be ordained.³⁹ The brothers won the friendship of two of the most influential men in Rome, the Greek-speaking secretary (bibliothecarius) of the Pope, Anastasius, and his uncle, Bishop Arsenius. Gauderich of Velletri, a great admirer of St. Clement, also supported Constantine.

Unfortunately, they soon lost these two most influential supporters. Arsenius, who was married before he became a bishop, had to flee from

³⁶ Most recently P. Duthilleul, *L'Évangélisation des Slaves, Cyrille et Méthode* (Paris, 1963), p. 118. This book has little scholarly value. The author is much more dependent on my French publications between 1926 and 1933 than he is ready to admit. Grivec, *op. cit.*, p. 77, admits that the invitation had reached them in Venice, perhaps on the initiative of Kocel.

³⁷ On these pilgrimages and on Greek monasteries in Rome see Dvornik, *Les Légendes* . . . , pp. 284-93.

³⁸ The relics were not genuine. It is not even established that Pope Clement (90-99?) died a martyr. The Acts of Clement, not composed until the fourth century, contained the legendary account of his exile and death as a martyr in Cherson. In Constantine's time the authenticity of this legend was generally accepted. For details see Dvornik, *Les Légendes* . . . , pp. 190 ff. Dittrich, *op. cit.*, p. 149, rightly rejects the thesis repeated recently by Grivec, *op. cit.*, p. 72, that the brothers had intended to bring the relics to Rome even before their journey to Moravia.

³⁹ It is generally believed that only three of them were ordained priests and two were given the minor order of lector. This opinion is based on the passage of the *Vita Methodii* (chap. 6, in Яапов, *op. cit.*, p. 72). There it is said that the Pope had ordered Formosus, one of the bishops who were critical of Constantine's innovations, to carry out this ordination. *Vita Constantini* (chap. 17, in Яапов, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 65) says simply that the Pope ordered bishops Formosus and Gauderich of Velletri to ordain their disciples. For the ordination of a priest only one bishop was needed. It can be concluded from this that Formosus ordained three priests and Gauderich some other disciples.

Rome when his son Eleutherius abducted and then murdered the Pope's daughter and her mother; for Hadrian had also been married before becoming Pope. Arsenius died in March, 868, and Anastasius, although not involved in the affair, lost the favor of the Pope and was excommunicated in October, 868. At the beginning of the summer of that year a Byzantine embassy arrived in Rome with the news that Michael III had been murdered by Basil I, who, on becoming emperor, deposed Photius and reappointed his rival Ignatius as patriarch.

These were the troubles which obsessed Constantine according to his biographer (chap. 18).⁴⁰ He became ill, took the solemn vows of a monk, adopting the name of Cyril, and died on February 14, 869. Methodius was determined to return to his monastery on Mount Olympus with the body of his brother, but the Pope persuaded him to deposit the remains in the church of St. Clement.

The death of Constantine-Cyril implied almost a catastrophe for the Byzantine mission in Moravia and Pannonia. What made the situation for Methodius and his disciples even more desperate was their uncertainty as to the degree to which the unexpected changes in Byzantium might influence the attitude of the Pope or of the new patriarch to their mission. All decisions seem to have been postponed. Constantine most probably died before the arrival of the new imperial embassy. This was to bring the representatives of the rival patriarchs who would appear before the Pope for his final decision. They did not arrive until the early spring. Methodius postponed his departure and awaited further developments.⁴¹

The situation was saved by the direct intervention of Kocel, the Pannonian prince. The brothers must have been in touch with him during their stay in Rome. He seems to have learned about the death of Constantine-Cyril, because the biographer of Methodius says (chap. 8)⁴² that Kocel dispatched an embassy to the Pope asking him to send Methodius back to him.

Kocel's initiative clarified the heavy atmosphere of uncertainty. The Pope saw in Kocel's readiness to accept Methodius as spiritual head of his country an opportunity of advancing further the realization of the daring plan of his predecessor Nicholas I. This concerned the subordination to direct papal jurisdiction of all lands which had been lost through barbarian invasion or imperial intervention.⁴³ Pannonia had

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 65.

⁴¹ Many students of these events came to unrealistic conclusions concerning the history of the two brothers because they did not pay sufficient attention to events in Rome and Constantinople in 868 and 869 and to the dates when the news from the East reached Rome. I tried to clarify this in the short study "Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Rome," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly* (New York), VII (1963), 20-30.

⁴² Лавров, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁴³ See for details Dvornik, *Les Légendes . . .*, pp. 248 ff.; *idem*, *The Photian Schism*, pp. 91 ff.

formed a part of the Roman province of Illyricum, which was under the direct jurisdiction of Rome before the barbarian invasions and the imperial decree of 732. The Greek provinces were lost to Byzantium, and Pannonia with Noricum was assigned by Charlemagne to Frankish clergy. The Pope saw in Kocel's message the opportunity of regaining Pannonia.

The plan was discussed with Methodius. The latter saw that the Pope was ready to save and to promote the fruits of the work of his brother, and abhorred the prospect of being involved in religious and political machinations if he should return to Constantinople. He therefore abandoned the idea of returning home and put himself at the disposal of the Pope to promote his policy.

So it happened that Methodius was sent as papal legate to Kocel, Rastislav, and his nephew Svatopluk with the famous papal bull⁴⁴ approving the Slavic liturgy, which was intended to act as a bond tying their countries together and to Rome. He disclosed to them also the Pope's plan to erect a new hierarchical organization in their countries independent of the Frankish bishops and directly dependent on Rome.

After securing the approval of the papal plan from the Slavic rulers, Methodius returned to Rome and was ordained archbishop of Sirmium (Srem), which had been the see of the metropolitan of Western Illyricum before the barbarian invasions. Methodius' jurisdiction was extended over Pannonia and Moravia.

In making such a sweeping decision Hadrian II seems to have overestimated the power of the Slavic princes. At the same time he underestimated the powerful position of the Franks in Pannonia and the determination of the Frankish hierarchy to defend their rights over that territory. We can detect the echo which this intervention provoked among the Frankish hierarchy in the document which they presented to Louis the German in 870.⁴⁵ It gives a clear picture of the progress of Christianity in Pannonia under the direction of the Frankish hierarchy during the previous seventy years, and, in spite of some exaggerations, it constitutes a most important document for the history of this country.

At the same time the Frankish bishops made a direct attack on Methodius. He was seized when he entered Pannonia or Moravia, accused of being an intruder, condemned by a local synod of the Frankish bishops, and interned in a monastery in Swabia.⁴⁶ Political complications facilitated their brutal intervention. Svatopluk, desirous of becoming ruler of Great Moravia, made an alliance with the Franks who

⁴⁴ *Vita Methodii*, in Лавров, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁴⁵ It is the famous *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*, ed. M. Kos (Ljubljana, 1936). See also the study of Paul J. Alexander, "The Papacy, the Bavarian Clergy, and the Slavonic Apostles," *The Slavonic Year-Book*, Vol. XX (1941) of *The Slavonic and East European Review*, pp. 266-93.

⁴⁶ It seems to have been the monastery at Ellwangen. See the bibliography on this problem in Grivec, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

seized Rastislav. Deprived of his sight and condemned by Louis the German, the unfortunate prince died in a Bavarian prison.

Only in 873 was the next Pope John VIII able to learn what had happened. Thanks to his intervention Methodius was freed⁴⁷ and received by Svatopluk, who, after betraying his Frankish allies and annihilating their army, had become once more an independent and powerful ruler (871). Although the Pope continued to regard Methodius as archbishop of Pannonia and Moravia, his jurisdiction was practically limited to Moravia, especially after the death of Kocel (probably in 876).

It was possibly the opposition of the Frankish clergy against the Slavic liturgy that influenced Svatopluk's attitude. Although he allowed the Slavic liturgy to spread, he himself preferred the Latin Mass, and he weakened the position of Methodius by asking John VIII to ordain one of his councilors, the German Wiching, as bishop of Nitra.

In spite of these difficulties, which were aggravated by the intrigues of Wiching, who had accused him in Rome, Methodius did not abandon the practice of the Slavic liturgy—again confirmed by John VIII in 880—and he continued the literary activity of his deceased brother. Methodius' biographer (chap. 15) and John the Exarch, a Bulgarian ecclesiastical writer of the tenth century, asserted that Methodius had translated all the books of the Old Testament, with the exception of the books of Maccabees. This report, although doubted by many specialists, is now confirmed by the research of J. Vajs,⁴⁸ who has found in the Glagolitic breviaries used in Dalmatia, lessons from the Old Testament which show that a Slavonic translation of the Old Testament from the Greek made during the Moravian period did in fact exist.

In order to give his Church a handbook of canon law, Methodius translated the Byzantine collection of John Scholasticus, called "Synagoga of Fifty Titles."⁴⁹ According to his biographer he also translated a Greek patericon, "The Books of the Fathers," and composed homilies, one of which seems to be preserved in the collection called Glagolita Clozianus.⁵⁰ Thus Methodius completed the cultural and religious work of his brother and left a rich cultural inheritance to his Slavs.

These cultural treasures, although intended in the first place for the Moravians, could not be enjoyed and further cultivated by them. Methodius died April 6, 885, and his work in Moravia was almost entirely destroyed by the intrigues of Wiching. The latter, probably excommunicated by Methodius on account of disobedience to his

⁴⁷ Cf. the letters sent by John VIII to the Bavarian bishops through a legate in *MGH, Ep.*, VII, 280-81.

⁴⁸ For details see J. Vajs's edition of Dobrovský's biography of the brothers, *Cyril a Metod* (Prague, 1948), pp. 143-53.

⁴⁹ H. F. Schmid, *Die Nomokanonübersetzung des Methodius* (Leipzig, 1922), pp. 47 ff., 89, 114; W. Lettenbauer, "Eine lateinische Kanonensammlung in Mähren im 9. Jahrhundert," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XVIII (1952), 246-69.

⁵⁰ See A. Dostál, *Clozianus* (Prague, 1959), pp. 124-44.

metropolitan, reached Rome and succeeded in obtaining under false pretences from Pope Stephen VI the condemnation of the use of the Slavic liturgy.

He did not obtain from the Pope his own appointment as archbishop of Moravia, but acted as such when he returned to that country. There is a strong probability that he used a forged papal bull in order to win over Svatopluk for hostile action against the disciples of Methodius, especially Gorazd, whom Methodius had recommended as his successor. Profiting in all probability by the absence of Svatopluk, who may have been on a military expedition, Wiching imprisoned the most prominent disciples of the late archbishop before the papal legate had arrived. We learn on this occasion that Svatopluk's army included a contingent of German mercenaries who, on Wiching's orders, expelled from Moravia the disciples of Byzantine origin—Clement, Angelarius, Laurentius, and others.⁵¹ The Life of one of these, Naum, relates how some Slavic clerics had even been sold into slavery in Venice and were freed by a high official of the Byzantine emperor, who had learned about their sad fate.

In spite of this persecution it cannot be supposed that all traces of Methodius' work in Moravia had vanished. Many Slavic clerics may have survived the persecution, protected by nobles who favored the use of the Slavic liturgy. There was still hope that Methodius' inheritance could be preserved and cultivated in Moravia. Wiching was finally expelled by Svatopluk (892) and Mojmir II, Svatopluk's successor (894), obtained from Pope John IX the ordination of an archbishop and three bishops. It is most probable that Gorazd, a Moravian by birth, who had been educated first by the Frankish missionaries and then by Methodius, and who had survived the persecution, became the successor of his master. The invasion of the Magyars, who had established themselves in modern Hungary and had overrun Pannonia and Moravia, however, put an unhappy end (about 906) to the hopes which the new ecclesiastical reorganization of Moravia had provoked.

This was, however, not the end. The real significance of the mission of SS. Constantine-Cyril and Methodius for the cultural development of the Slavs became apparent only after the Moravian catastrophe. The disciples of the two brothers, expelled from Moravia, found a cordial reception in Bulgaria. They saved most of the cultural treasures inherited from the two brothers and continued to add to them numerous other works in Slavic. The Bulgarian khagan Boris-Michael used the Slavonic liturgy to strengthen the independence of his Church. The Byzantines understood its importance better than Rome. When Metho-

⁵¹ For details see Dittrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 270 ff. However, not all of his presentation of this affair can be accepted. The Greek Life of St. Clement is the main source for these happenings, Migne, *PG*, Vol. CXXVI, cols. 1192 ff. Modern edition by Тунцкій, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-144. Edition by Мплев, *op. cit.*, pp. 54 ff. The Life of Naum was published by Явров, *op. cit.*, pp. 183 ff.

dus visited Constantinople in 882, he was asked by Patriarch Photius to leave in the capital copies of Slavic liturgical books and a Slavic priest with a deacon. This small Slavic center in Constantinople was reinforced in 885, when other disciples of Methodius, freed from slavery by a Byzantine official, reached Constantinople. It can be imagined that this kind of Slavic center supplied Greek religious literature to Clement and his companions for translation into Slavic with the encouragement of Byzantine political and religious authorities. The Byzantines, never hostile to the introduction of national vernaculars into the liturgy, understood only too well how to utilize the fruits of Cyril's and Methodius' mission in Moravia for their own advantage. Seeing that for the time being at least they could not extend their political domination over Bulgaria, they did however bring the new Christian nation under their cultural influence.

So it happened that the golden age of Slavonic literature was the reign of Boris' successor, Tsar Symeon in the tenth century. Symeon, who was educated in Constantinople, wanted to have most of the Byzantine literature with which he became acquainted translated into Slavonic. The two Slavonic schools in Preslav and Ochrida rivaled each other in producing Slavic treatises and translations from the Greek. The Byzantine mission to Moravia had brought forth prodigious fruit in Bulgaria.⁵² The Bulgarians were also to transmit this cultural inheritance to Serbia.

It seemed, in the tenth century, that similar fruits would also ripen in Bohemia. Many Slavic clerics found refuge in that country after the Moravian catastrophe. Slavonic literature continued to be cultivated in Bohemia and some of the best works of the Moravian period—especially the Lives of Constantine-Cyril and Methodius—were saved. Other original works were produced in Slavonic—the Lives of St. Wenceslas, St. Ludmila, and St. Procopius—and translations were made from the Latin—the Lives of SS. Guy, Benedict, Apollinaris, Pope Stephen, and others. Unfortunately, the centralizing tendencies which manifested themselves in Rome, especially under Gregory VII (1073-85), put an untimely end to this development. At the end of the eleventh century the Slavonic liturgy, which existed in Bohemia side by side with the Latin, disappeared, and only Latin continued to be used by Bohemian writers. At the same time there disappeared also the last traces of the Moravian Slavonic inheritance in southern Poland, which had been part of Great Moravia. Gorazd with some of his clergy seems to have taken refuge there. His name at least was found in the remnants of a calendar in Wiślica, where he is marked as a saint.

The greatest profit from the Moravian Bulgarian and Bohemian inheritance was realized by the Eastern Slavs. Almost all Slavonic literary

⁵² I have given a review of literary activity in Slavic lands to the end of the thirteenth century in my book *The Slavs, Their Early History and Civilization*, pp. 147 ff.

products of Bohemia in the tenth and eleventh centuries are preserved in Russian manuscripts.⁵³ This indicates that at that period the contact between the Slavic clergy of Bohemia and of Kiev must have been lively. Books written in Slavonic had reached Kiev soon after the baptism of Vladimir (989). The Byzantine Church used the same methods in the Christianization of the Eastern Slavs as it used in Bulgaria. When this latter country had again become a Byzantine province, many Slavic clerics settled in Kiev, bringing with them books in Slavonic. These laid the foundations on which the Russians of Kiev built their imposing literary monuments. They excelled mainly in historical compositions. The Primary Russian Chronicle shows that in this respect they were able even to surpass their Byzantine masters. Very few nations possess as many medieval chronicles and annals as the Eastern Slavs. The Igor Tale also shows how well Slavonic poetry could develop.

This short sketch of the cultural development of the Slavic nations in the Middle Ages seems necessary to show the real significance of the mission of the two Greek brothers. Its aim in Moravia was, above all, cultural. In spite of so many setbacks the work of the brothers did not perish in the ruins of the Great Moravian Empire. It was saved by their disciples and became the basis on which the eastern and southern Slavs were to build their literature and culture under Byzantine inspiration.

⁵³ Cf. F. Dvornik, "Les Bénédictins et la christianisation de la Russie," *L'Église et les Églises* (Chevetogne, 1954), pp. 323-49.